DEMAND V—STAMPS.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Sir, I move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 85,000 under Demand V—Stamps.

Motion 66.

The following motion was not moved :—

MR. C. P. KOCHUKUNJU PILLAI :

66. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 9,969 for Establishment by Rs. 900.

Motion 67.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*) : Sir, I move :—

67. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 8,000 for purchase and repair of machinery by Rs. 1,000.

The sum of Rs. 8,000 seems to be needed for purchasing one Wharfedale Stamping machine and one Gumming machine, as well as probably for carrying some other business. In the previous year, the amount that was required with respect to this particular item was only Rs. 1,000. How in the previous year they were managing the stamping and gumming is not explained. I suppose even now the Stamp Manufactory has some machinery for the purpose of stamping and gumming. What has become of that particular machinery is not explained. Unless that is explained, I thought I would raise the question to call for further information to enable the House to judge of the reasonableness of the demand. With that idea it was that I have sent in this motion.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I shall explain that point. Every year we have some expenditure on repairs to machinery. I shall first explain that in 1097 we had incurred an expenditure of Rs. 723, in 1098, Rs. 765 and in 1099, Rs. 442. That is for the ordinary charge of repairing the machinery. What we propose to allot for the next year is Rs. 8,000. That is for the purchase of one Wharfedale Stamping machine or any other suitable machine and it is estimated that it will cost something like Rs. 7,000.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*) : May I know from Mr. George whether there is any machinery equivalent to that machine in the Stamp Manufactory at present?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): No, we have not.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*) : Is there no machinery at present which is utilised for the purpose of the work which is attempted to be got through by means of the new machine?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : I shall explain why we need the machine. There are several machines in the Stamp Manufactory. Some of them are treadle machines. For the printing of the anchal labels we are using very old machines. I

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believe, when the Stamp Manufactory was shifted to the present place about 1082, these machines were already there. Everybody knows that the printing of labels is not very satisfactory. The appearance of the labels themselves shows that. That is only due to the fact that these machines are not at all satisfactory for printing purposes.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Is there any expert opinion with respect to the unsoundness of the present machinery?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I have myself seen them. The machines are moved by hand and the work done is never uniform. Also, the gumming process is done by the hand, which is a very clumsy affair. On the other hand, if we get a good machine, it would make both these processes work very satisfactorily. It is to improve the system of stamping in the Stamp Manufactory that we want to purchase the machines. It is only in order to get the work done on up-to-date lines. There has been some complaint about the appearance of the stamps being unsatisfactory. If you compare the stamps used in British India and other places with those used here, you will find that the appearance of our stamps is not creditable. This difference is due to the fact that the printing is done in England and not in India. This is the object with which we propose to utilise about Rs. 7,000.

As regards gumming, a sum of Rs. 765 is needed for getting down a machine. At present, gumming is done by hand.

MR. V. SUBBA AIYAR (*Nominated*) (*Deputy President*): Are the labels gummed at all?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): If you purchase them now, you will see that they are gummed. But the gumming is done in a clumsy fashion and it is not uniform. Uniformity can also be ensured if you have got a good gumming machine as in other places.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): When the machine is got down, is there any possibility of a reduction of hands?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): There will certainly be some scope for a reduction of hands.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): If the House has nothing to say on this matter, I am not very particular, Sir. I simply brought up the matter for discussion. I fear my side of the House has no interest in the matter and therefore I withdraw the motion. (*Laughter.*)

The motion was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Motion 68.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Sir, my motion is—

68. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 12,000 for purchase of card boards, etc., by Rs. 2,000.

Looking to the previous figures referring to this subject, I see the demands of 1099 required only Rs. 10,000 and odd. The budget estimate for 1100 was only so much. Why the necessity rose to Rs. 12,000

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[Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai.]

for the next year I fail to understand. Then there is the mysterious "etcetera" (*laughter*) also there. What the "etcetera" would cost and what the purchase of card-boards alone would cost are not very clear. It is these apprehensions that have led to the moving of the resolution and I move it accordingly.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Sir, Mr. Narayana Pillai did not go sufficiently far back. If he had done so, he would have found that in 1095 we spent Rs. 23,924, in 1096 about Rs. 33,000, in 1097 Rs. 34,676, in 1098 Rs. 11,384 and in 1099 Rs. 10,337. It is clear from that—

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): The figures supplied in the budget contain only the amount for 1099.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): For the next year, we have asked for Rs. 12,000 because the indents from the Central Stamp Depôt on the Stamp Manufactory is 5 lakhs in excess of the last year's indent. 25 lakhs of cards and 25 lakhs of envelopes—and that is the "*etcetera*"—are asked for by the Central Stamp Depôt. Of course, when the demand for cards and covers increases, we have to provide the necessary material for manufacturing them.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): May I know the exact balance in stock of cards and covers that remain in the Stamp Manufactory?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Printed or unprinted?

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Printed.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I cannot exactly say. We usually provide a stock for six months more.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): There is generally some balance left?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Certainly. Otherwise, the public will be put to very great difficulty and inconvenience. We cannot get cards at a moment's notice. So, when the indent is larger, necessarily we have to go in for a larger supply of card boards and envelopes. That is all the reason for this sum of Rs. 12,000. I am afraid, on the other hand, that this amount may not be enough. Again, these things if purchased will not be useful for any other purpose. Considering the figures for the previous years, I am doubtful whether this amount will be enough. Anyhow, that is the present demand and I trust the House will sanction it.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): This time, Sir, I am not going to yield. (*Laughter*). Without understanding the balance of stock in hand, it is difficult to predict what will be the amount actually required for the next year.

I am of opinion, Sir, that nothing substantial has been pointed out though Mr. George has been referring to figures of remoter years.

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With respect to the position in the nearest past, the matter seems to be in my favour. Therefore I am pressing the motion to a division. Evidently, if my friend finds there would be a necessity, he can bring it before the House as a supplementary demand. With these words, I press my motion to a division.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Sir, the experience of the past is also not in favour of Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai. In 1098, it was Rs. 11,300 and in 1099, Rs. 10,837.

MR. CHANGANACHERY K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): May I know the reason for the sudden fall?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): One obvious reason was that the prices during these years of War and as well as the years that immediately followed were very high. Even granting that the figures are in his favour, I could see any justification only for a reduction of Rs. 1,000, and that cannot be made because in 1099 the expenditure was nearly Rs. 10,837. Besides that, as I said before, there is an indent from the Central Stamp Depôt for 25,00,000 of cards and 25,00,000 of envelopes for the year 1101.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): May I know when the indent was sent in?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Two or three months previously, according to the rules, I believe. It will be seen from the Stamp revenue that the demands for these cards and envelopes are increasing more and more. So I think that there is no possibility of reducing the allotment without the public being inconvenienced.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Was there not wastage of paper in the Stamp Manufactory?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): There was wastage of court-fee paper. But there is no wastage in card boards. If the stock of cards and envelopes is not sufficient, it is the public who will be put to difficulty. Under these circumstances, this grant of Rs. 12,000 is absolutely necessary.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Does Mr. George agree to a cut of Rs. 1,000 as a compromise?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): No.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Then, I press the motion to a division.

The motion was put to the vote and lost, 10 voting *for* and 25 *against*.

Motion 69.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI (*Kalkulam cum Vilavankod*): Sir, I beg to move the following motion:

69. *To reduce the allotment of Rs 200 for purchase and repair of furniture by Rs. 100.*

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[Mr. T. Kumara Pillai.]

സാമാനം എല്ലാ ആണ്ടിലും വാങ്ങേണ്ട ആവശ്യമുണ്ടെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല. ഓരോ ആണ്ടിലും സാമാനം വാങ്ങുന്നതിനു പണം ചിലവാക്കുന്നത് ന്യായമല്ല. അതുകൊണ്ട് ആ ഇനത്തിൽ നൂറു രൂപ കുറയ്ക്കണം.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I accept that cut.

The motion was declared carried.

Motion 70.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI (*Kalkulam* cum *Vilavankod*): Sir, I beg to move the following motion:

70. *To reduce the allotment of Rs. 400 for Office expenses and Miscellaneous by Rs. 150.*

മുമ്പെ ഒരവസരത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞതുപോലെതന്നെ ഈ സംഗതിയിലും വീണ്ടും പറയേണ്ടതായിരിക്കുന്നു. അതുകൊണ്ട് ഈ തുകയും കുറയ്ക്കണമെന്നാണ് എന്റെ അഭിപ്രായം.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Sir, I cannot accept every cut that is presented. In the first place, I shall explain why we have combined two heads 'office expenses' and 'miscellaneous.' Two years ago, these heads were separate; but in practice it was found difficult to allocate the charges for office expenses and miscellaneous. With a view to reduce the number of these contingent heads, we thought of clubbing them all together. We found a great deal of difficulty to decide as to which is office expense and which is miscellaneous.

As regards the office expenses and miscellaneous expenditure under Stamps, I beg to point out that the expenditure has been going down very regularly from 1095. In 1095, the expenditure was Rs. 572, in 1096 Rs. 691, in 1097 Rs. 500, in 1098 Rs. 528 and in 1099 Rs. 264. Now for 1101 a little more is asked for and there is special reason for that. We are going to have a new die for new cards. The cards, which will issue shortly, will be new and for that purpose what is called a mother-die has already been got down from a firm in Madras. Now we have to get electros out of it and that may cost us some money. That is why we want a little more money for next year. It will be seen that from 1099 there has been gradual economy under this item of expenditure. Before that time the expenditure was almost double the present allotment. The items of expenditure that make up this amount are materials for die-making, as I said just now, and the cost of transport of stamps manufactured from the Manufactory to the Central Stamp Depôt. Then there is the cost of the rollers which have to be made in the institution itself.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): May I know from Mr. George whether there is not an engraver in the Stamp Manufactory?

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MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Yes.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): May I know what then was the reason for ordering a die from Madras?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): To get an improved die.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): May I know whether the engraver is not competent to do it?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Whatever be his competency, it was thought that the public should be supplied with good stamps and good cards. Past experience shows that it is not up to date. He can take electros out of these blocks.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): May I know whether they were getting these dies from Madras before?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Not after I came to know of it. Sir, there have been complaints that the figure and the impressions on cards are not satisfactory. That is why we got it down from an experienced firm. These are the various items which come under this head and it will be seen that the expenditure is, year by year, being very much economised.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI (*Kalkulam* cum *Vilavankod*): After hearing the explanations offered by Mr. George, I withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion 71.

The following motion was not made:

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI.

71. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 20,860 for Manufactory by Rs. 100.

Motion 72.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): Sir, I beg to move the following motion:

72. *To reduce the allotment of Rs. 20,860 for Manufactory by Rs. 100.*

My object in moving for a reduction under this demand is to point out the injustice done to 15 or 16 Superintendents in the Huzur Cutcherry and in the Account Office by appointing Mr. Chacko as Superintendent of the Stamp Manufactory over their heads. Of course, I am not going to talk on this aspect further as I have received a letter this morning stating that I am not allowed to speak on that subject.

Sir, I have got to say a few words about the appointments made by Mr. Chacko after he took charge of his office as Superintendent, Stamp Manufactory. Since his taking charge of the institution there is very great unrest amongst the employees so far as the appointments and promotions are concerned. He has made, I think, 23 appointments in all and out of them more than 13 or so are his own caste-men and these were entertained overlooking the claims of several acting men. I

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[Mr. M. N. Pillai.]

understand that some of them even petitioned Her Highness the Maha Rani Regent and the Government about the injustice done to them in this matter, and that Government, I hear, have ordered that they should be reinstated in their posts.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil* cum *Devicolam*): May I know the total number of employees in the Manufactory?

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): About 200 or so, I am not sure.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil* cum *Devicolam*): The total number of employees in that Department?

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I am not aware of it.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil* cum *Devicolam*): Does the member know the proportion of the men of other communities when compared with the men of Mr. Chacko's caste?

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I do not know anything about it. Mr. Joseph will be able to get the information from the *Administration Report*. I am not sure of the total strength or the proportion.

Now what I want to point out is that Mr. Chacko, the present Superintendent, has given a contract for the maintenance of the Stamp Manufactory to one of the employees by name Govindan—

PRESIDENT: Is that a definite allegation that the member is making?

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I am reliably informed that an employee by name Govindan is given contracts and there is another employee who is allowed to take up P. W. D. contracts.

PRESIDENT: These are matters outside the scope of the motion that the member is moving.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I think I am only pointing out the policy pursued by the Superintendent and it is not desirable that an officer in the State should allow his subordinates to take up contracts.

PRESIDENT: That again, I say, is outside the scope of the motion.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I wanted to draw the attention of Government to all these matters. That was the reason why I put forward the motion. Mr. Chacko is an officer drawing a pay of Rs. 150 and he is given powers of appointment and dismissal up to Rs. 25, which the previous Superintendents were not allowed. I think that it is very necessary that the Government should make an enquiry into the allegations, and if they are true, the officer should be severely dealt with. With these words, I move the motion.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Sir, it is rather to be regretted that communal partiality of an individual has been brought to be discussed in this House, and I can positively disprove that there has been no such thing.

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MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): This is what I heard and so I made the statement (*Laughter*).

PRESIDENT: If the member makes a serious allegation on mere hearsay, I think he owes it to the House to say so.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): I had sent up an interpellation. If I were supplied with the answer, I would have been more definite.

PRESIDENT: The member should not have brought up this question without having facts.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Sir, I am prepared to explain to the House the distribution of appointments, caste-war, made by Mr. Chacko. Mr. Chacko has appointed permanently and acting 10 Nayars, 10 Christians, 1 Brahmin, 2 Ezhavas and one other caste. Besides these appointments—as Superintendent of Stamps he has no powers to appoint above Rs. 25—I have made three appointments and these went to Nayars.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil cum Devicolam*): May I know whether there are particular rules as to how these appointments should be made?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): There is no rule at present. Just before the appointment of Mr. Chacko as Superintendent, Stamp Manufactory, the staff consisted of 53 hands, of which 4 were Brahmins, 37 Nayars, 7 Christians and 5 from other communities.

MR. C. P. TARAKAN (*Kunnatnad*): May I know who was in charge of the institution before Mr. Chacko?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Mr. Sankaranarayana Aiyar was in charge. Before him Mr. Vasudeva Kurup and before him Mr. Watts, who retired as Superintendent.

MR. M. SUBRAHMANYA PILLAI (*Agastisvaram*): Are there any Tamilians in the Department?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I have not got an analysis in that way. However, as this matter has been brought to the notice of the House, I have to explain and I believe the House will agree with me that, if the number of members belonging to Mr. Chacko's community is taken into consideration, there is nothing to complain of. Mr. Chacko's community got only 7 appointments out of 53.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): Is it out of the total number of hands?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Yes. Out of the 53 when Mr. Chacko took charge, 4 were Brahmins, 37 were Nayars, 7 were Christians.

MR. V. SUBBA AIYAR (*Nominated*) (*Deputy President*): How does it stand now?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I do not know. I know about the appointments made by him and me.

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MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : May I know whether all of them are still there ?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : I do not know. These are his appointments, and that is all I know.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): May I know whether they are still in the Stamp Manufactory or whether they have been sent away ?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): That matter I have not ascertained. I believe they are still there because, if a man once acted, he has a claim for further acting.

MR. M. SIVATANU PILLAI (*Tovala*): May I know whether "other castes" include Tamilians also ?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): The appointments classed under "other castes" are distributed as follows : one Idayan, one Ambalavasi and one barber.

MR. N. KUMARAN (*Nominated*) : May I know why more Ezhavas were not appointed ?

MR. K. GEORGE. (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : I cannot answer that question. Because–

MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*) : അതിൽ കത്തോലിക്കർ ഏതു പേരുണ്ട്.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : I believe there are Catholics.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*) : May I know whether all the taluks are duly represented in the Stamp Manufactory? (*Laughter.*)

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : That is a question which I cannot answer.

MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN (*Muvattupuzha*) : മൂവാറ്റുപുഴതാലൂക്കിൽ പെട്ടവർ ഏതുപേരുണ്ട് ?

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil* cum *Devicolam*) : May I know whether there is any rule as regards the percentage of appointments that should be reserved for each community?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): There is no rule at present. The sense of fairness of the officers is relied on at present.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*) : Will Mr. George be pleased to say whether the allegation, that some of the appointments made by Mr. Chacko were cancelled by Government, is true ?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): There was no allegation that the appointments made by Mr. Chacko were cancelled. The allegation was that he did not appoint certain persons who had acted previously, and that these persons had to be restored.

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MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*) : Is that allegation true ?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : These men were not there when Mr. Chacko took charge of the department. About two of them, the previous Superintendent had recorded unfavourable opinions. Not knowing the claims of these men who had acted before, Mr. Chacko appointed others. When these men turned up, he said that there were no vacancies and that, therefore, they must wait. They petitioned to higher authorities and also to Government.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : May I know why these men were sent away and why Mr. Chacko appointed others ?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): They were not sent away by Mr. Chacko. They were not there when he took charge. When they urged their claims, Mr. Chacko said that they must wait until vacancies occurred.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : Is it not a fact that these men applied to Mr. Chacko when he appointed other men ? And did not Mr. Chacko appoint others when these rightful claimants were waiting outside for appointments ?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : Probably their applications were received only after Mr. Chacko had made the appointments.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) That is not what I say.

PRESIDENT : Excuse me if I am interrupting you. This is a token vote. You can speak on the policy, but not in respect of individuals.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : I think I have adequately explained the matter. Something was said about contracts. That also, I must say, is a mistake. That does not arise from his motion. Still he made mention of it. Therefore, I say it is not correct.

MR. M. N. PILLAI (*Trivandrum*) : I withdraw the motion.

PRESIDENT : Does the House *really* consent to the motion being withdrawn ?

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

PRESIDENT : I must say how greatly I deplore a motion of that sort. Allegations of a very grave nature have been made under the cloak of a total motion, while, as Mr. George was able to establish, the whole thing was without foundation, and, as admitted by the member himself, based on hearsay. I think it rather unworthy that, having made such serious allegations, the member should incontinently withdraw the motion.

Motion 73.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*) : Sir, I beg to to make the following motion :

73. To omit the allotment of Rs. 15,000 for discount on sale of stamps.

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[Mr. T. J. Matthew.]

Stamps are now sold through agents, and to these agents a discount is given by Government. What I want to bring to the notice of Government is that this method of selling stamps is too expensive. I would suggest that the sale of stamps be conducted by Government directly by appointing clerks, either under the Munsiff of each district or under the Tahsildar or under the Treasury Officer. If that is done, I think, Government may get some gain. It would also be more convenient for the public to purchase stamps and stamp papers from Government Offices. It is not my object to move for the whole allotment being omitted. My only object is to bring this suggestion to the notice of the Government. Therefore, if the House would allow me to withdraw the motion, I am prepared to do so.

MR. C. P. TARAKAN (*Kunnatnad*): ഓരോ താലൂക്കുകളിലും പല സ്ഥലങ്ങളിലും സ്റ്റാമ്പുവെണ്ടർമാർ ഉണ്ടെന്നറിയാമോ?

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): There is only one place, in each taluk, where stamps are being sold.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Sir,—

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): If Mr. Matthew is withdrawing the motion with the permission of the House, I do not think there is any necessity for any further discussion of the matter.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I have a right to reply. He cannot withdraw now after having moved it and made a speech while doing so.

Sir, it is a proposal which should be deemed retrograde; because, I think the change proposed by my friend, would cause the greatest inconvenience to the class of people whom Mr. Matthew represents, I mean to the practising lawyers and the litigant public. Mr. Matthew's suggestion is that clerks should be appointed in the Munsiff's Courts or in the Taluk Offices or in the Treasuries. There are very many places where there is no Munsiff's Court, or Taluk Office or Treasury. I think it would be a great inconvenience to the people if they have to go to the Munsiff's Court or to the Taluk Office or to the Treasury for the purpose of purchasing a stamp. Besides, I think the arrangement proposed would be more expensive than at present; or even if a saving be effected, it would be comparatively little; because, the work cannot be done except with the appointment of additional staff.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): May I know how many stamp-vendors are now actually engaged in selling stamps?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I have not got the information about the number of stamp-vendors.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): May I have an approximate idea as to the number of stamp-vendors?

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MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I suppose there would be about 200.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): For the whole State?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I think so.

MR. K. I. JOSEPH (*Minachil* cum *Devicolam*): What is the percentage of discount allowed?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): We allowed a discount of 3 per cent. before; but we have reduced it to 2 per cent. now.

MR. C. P. TARAKAN (*Kunnatnad*): ക്ലർത്തൽ ക്ലാക്കിനെ നിയമിക്കാതെ ഇപ്പോൾ ഉള്ള ക്ലാക്കിനെകൊണ്ടു നടത്തിക്കാൻ സാധിക്കയില്ലേ?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I think it would be absolutely impossible because there will be loud complaints. The complaints which the vakils make would be that the clerks cannot attend to sale of stamps for want of time.

MR. V. SUBBA AIYAR (*Nominated*) (*Deputy President*): Is it not a serious matter to entrust stamps of very large value to clerks?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): If they are entrusted, they will have to deposit heavy securities, and if they deposit securities, we will have to pay them amply. If we are creating new offices, we have to provide for their pension also. I think it will cost Rs. 30 or Rs. 35 per head if we introduce this system which, I believe, was in existence years ago and was abolished at the instance of the public. So, I do not think the proposal is one which could be introduced. However, I have no objection to examine that question in more detail if the House wishes.

MR. CHANGANACHERY K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Quilon*): May I know whether it is not likely to lead to corruption?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): That is also just possible.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): I do not understand what he means by saying that there will be an opportunity for corruption.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): Some other member said so.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*): However, the member adopted it as his.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*): I say it might lead to corruption.

MR. K. K. THOMAS (*Kottayam*): Even now there is the difficulty with regard to stamps of higher denomination. We send our men to purchase stamps from the treasury and some amount has to be given as tips to the underlings.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know whether a member is allowed to make a long speech instead of putting a question?

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MR. K. GEORGE (*Financial Secretary to Government*) : I should like to know the question.

MR. K. K. THOMAS (*Kottayam*) : It is not a question. I think if the motion is to be withdrawn, we need not dilate upon this question. The system obtaining at present is a great convenience to the public and to the class of people we represent. With regard to the distribution of these vendors, in almost every town we have vendors at convenient distances. Most of them come and seek us and oblige us by bringing the papers to our doors. In the case of higher stamp papers which we have to get from the treasury, I usually find it is very difficult to get these papers. We have to send a man to the treasury and he waits there for hours together until the treasury is opened and he has to hang upon some dignitary in charge of the stamp papers. So I think the present system which works cheaply may be maintained, and so I oppose the motion.

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*) : At the suggestion of one of the members, the Financial Secretary said that the system which I suggested was liable to promote corruption. On the contrary, so far as I understand, it is the present system that may lead to corruption.

MR. CHANGANACHERY K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Quilon*) : May I know whether the statement made by Mr. Thomas that the stamp vendors seek the vakils for the sale of stamps is not correct ?

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*) : I think it is correct

MR. CHANGANACHERY K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Quilon*) : May I know whether, if paid agency is appointed, we will have to go to the man for the purchase of stamps, and whether there will not be lot of demand on his time and whether he is not likely to take tips?

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*) : As regards that, I do not consider that the difficulty of Vakil's clerk going to Munsiff's Court or to the Taluk Cutcherry is such a very great thing that it should weigh with the Government in considering whether the system should be adopted.

MR. C. P. THOMAS (*Nominated*) : Is it only the Vakils' clerks that have to go there?

MR. T. J. MATTHEW (*Changanachery* cum *Peermade*) : I am sure the present vendors do not go to the houses of all the people. I think that was the question asked. I surely deny that. What must weigh with the Government in these matters is what the actual gain to Government is, without, of course, seriously inconveniencing the public. The inconvenience suggested by my friend is not very considerable. If you go back to the question of corruption, there have been several instances in which some vendors did really correct the date of sale of stamp papers. When parties wanted to ante-date a document, they used to correct the date upon the back of the stamp paper. Such corrections would also be

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made in the registers. Even the names of the purchasers have been found to be corrected. But if this sale is conducted through Government officers under the supervision of responsible officers such as Munsiffs or Tahsildars, there is no such scope for correction. As, however, this is a matter that ought to be enquired into and as the Financial Secretary promised that it will be considered and enquired into, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the motion.

PRESIDENT: May I take it that the House permits the motion being withdrawn ?

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn ?

PRESIDENT: I shall now put to the vote of the House the demand for Rs. 85 lakh *minus* Rs. 100 under Demand V—Stamps.

The motion was carried and the grant was made.

ELECTION RE. FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR 1101.

PRESIDENT: I should like to request the non-official members to be so good as to elect three gentlemen from among them to serve on the Finance Committee during the year 1101.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): Is the other committee to be convened by Mr. Robinson ?

PRESIDENT: I am coming to that. I want you to make two elections, three members to serve on the Finance Committee for 1101 and three other members to serve on the Land Records Maintenance Committee. The elections will be held under the presidency of the Deputy President.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI (*Commerce and Industry, North*): To-day ?

PRESIDENT: You can do it at any time you like.

MR. V. SUBBA AIYAR (*Nominated*) (*Deputy President*): We may have the Land Records Committee election to-morrow and the other the day after to-morrow.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): We may hold both the elections to-morrow.

PRESIDENT: Yes, you may hold both to-morrow as soon as the Council adjourns.

The House will now adjourn to meet again at 11·30 A. M. to-morrow.

The Council adjourned at 5-34 P. M.

T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR,
Secretary to the Legislative Council.

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